

Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting *August 2, 2007*

Good morning. I just had a—I finished a Cabinet meeting. One of the things we discussed was the terrible situation there in Minneapolis. We talked about the fact that the bridge collapsed, and that we in the Federal Government must respond, and respond robustly, to help the people there not only recover but to make sure that life-line of activity, that bridge gets rebuilt as quickly as possible.

To that end, Secretary Peters is in Minneapolis, as well as Federal Highway Administrator Capka. I spoke to Governor Pawlenty and Mayor Rybak this morning. I told them that the Secretary would be there. I told them we would help with rescue efforts, but I also told them how much we are in prayer for those who suffered. And I thank our fellow—my fellow citizens for holding up those who are suffering right now in prayer.

We also talked about—in the Cabinet meeting—talked about the status of important pieces of legislation before the Congress. We spent a fair amount of time talking about the fact that how disappointed we are that Congress hasn't sent any spending bills to my desk. By the end of this week, Members are going to be leaving for their month-long August recess. And by the time they will return, there will be less than a month before the end of the fiscal year on September the 30th, and yet they haven't passed 1 of the 12 spending bills that they're required to pass. If Congress doesn't pass the spending bills by the end of the fiscal year, Cabinet Secretaries report that their Departments may be unable to move forward with urgent priorities for our country.

This just doesn't have to be this way. The Democrats won last year's election fair and square, and now they control the calendar for bringing up bills in Congress. They need to pass each of these spending

bills individually, on time, and in a fiscally responsible way.

The budget I've sent to Congress fully funds America's priorities. It increases discretionary spending by 6.9 percent. My Cabinet Secretaries assure me that this is adequate to meet the needs of our Nation.

Unfortunately, Democratic leaders in Congress want to spend far more. Their budget calls for nearly \$22 billion more in discretionary spending next year alone. These leaders have tried to downplay that figure. Yesterday one called this increase, and I quote, "a very small difference" from what I proposed. Only in Washington can \$22 billion be called a very small difference. And that difference will keep getting bigger. Over the next 5 years, it will total nearly \$205 billion in additional discretionary spending. That \$205 billion averages out to about \$112 million per day, \$4.7 million per hour, \$78,000 per minute.

Put another way, that's about \$1,300 in higher spending every second of every minute of every hour of every day of every year for the next 5 years. That's a lot of money—even for career politicians in Washington. In fact, at that pace, Democrats in Congress would have spent an extra \$300,000 since I began these remarks.

There's only one way to pay for all this new Federal spending without running up the deficit, and that is to raise your taxes. A massive tax hike is the last thing the American people need. The plan I put forward would keep your taxes low and balance the budget within 5 years, and that is the right path for our country.

I want to thank OMB Director Rob Portman for his hard work in developing this plan. This was Rob's last Cabinet meeting. Laura and I wish him and his family well. And I call on the Senate to confirm his successor, Jim Nussle, so we can work together to keep our Government running,

to keep our economy growing, and to keep our Nation strong.

Thank you for your time.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:54 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his

remarks, he referred to Gov. Timothy J. Pawlenty of Minnesota; and Mayor R.T. Rybak of Minneapolis, MN. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With the Counterterrorism Team *August 3, 2007*

I thank you all for coming. Director Mueller, thank you for your hospitality. I'm honored to be here at the headquarters of the FBI. Just a beginning of a series of meetings today, and during those meetings, it is clear that people around that table fully understand we have no higher duty than to protect the American people. And so I'm pleased to be with my homeland security and counterterrorism teams. We've got folks in our government who spend every day working side by side with like-minded men and women in our Federal Government, all aiming to protect you, doing everything they can to protect the American people from a dangerous enemy.

I'm going to spend a little time later on this afternoon with intelligence analysts who spend every day analyzing data, attempting to track down known and suspected terrorists who either may be here or elsewhere. We've done a lot of work since September the 11th to make this country safe, and it is safer, but it's not completely safe. It's important for the American people to understand there are coldblooded killers who want to come to our homeland and wreak havoc through death. And that's what we were discussing today.

We take a clear-eyed view of the world. The people on this team, assembled in this building, see the world the way it is, not the way we hope it is. And this is a dangerous world because there's an enemy that wants to strike the homeland again. You

know, it was a year ago that I met with the counterterrorism team—that we worked with Great Britain to uncover a airline plot, a plot that had it gone forward would have caused death on a massive scale. It was a reminder that the terrorists we face are sophisticated, they are coldblooded, they are changing tactics, and we must always stay ahead of them.

In other words, we've got to do more than just keep pace with these people. We've got to be ahead of the people in order to protect the American people, in order to do our most important duty. And that's what we're talking about today.

Part of the effort to do our job, part of the effort for this Federal Government to do the job the American people expects us to do in protecting you is to close intelligence gaps. We have such an intelligence gap in the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. The act needs to be modernized so that all of us engaged in protecting the American people say we have the tools we need to protect you. Leaders in Congress have said they would like to address this problem before they go home, and I appreciate that spirit.

The Director of National Intelligence, Mike McConnell, has provided the Congress with a narrow and targeted piece of legislation that will close the gaps in intelligence. In other words, he's working on the Hill, and he's told Members this is what we need to do our job to protect